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Performing Resistance: Brian Friel's Adaptation of Brian Moore's *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*

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Performing Resistance: Brian Friel's Adaptation of Brian Moore's *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*

by

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Report

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Abstract

Performing Resistance: Brian Friel's Adaptation of Brian Moore's *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*

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This paper tracks Irish playwright Brian Friel's unpublished film adaptation of Brian Moore's novel *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*, examining the historical context and content of both works. In his screenplay, Friel recasts Moore's heroine as performing a series of resistant gestures towards the social, economic, and religious institutions of Belfast in the 1950's institutions by which Moore's protagonist is depicted as thoroughly trapped. I argue that the political violence of the 1970's inflects Friel's adaptation, causing him to shift his focus to the economic conditions of working class Catholics in the years preceding the Troubles, and to the possibilities of non-violent, resistant performances in both protesting injustice and articulating marginalized identities.

Table of Contents

Performing Resistance: Brian Friel's Adaptation of Brian Moore's *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*

The work of playwright Brian Friel often stages the process of negotiation between the individual consciousness and the encoded rituals of public life, examining the ways in which the performative self both resists and conforms to social norms in establishing a sense of identity. In the Northern Irish context, many of Friel's plays have been read as attempts at decoding a social, religious, and political system defined by difference and exclusion. These plays speak to a collective imagination informed by wall and checkpoint; protected by password and shibboleth; informed by strictly policed, yet often ill-defined physical and behavioral borders. Within this context, Friel often creates characters whose self-realization depends upon their ability to transgress these borders, "flout[ing] the corporeal regime of their particular community, social environment, and historical moment" (McMullan 142). By depicting marginal characters that are excluded from society by their class, gender, or politics, Friel explores the possibilities of performance as a means of both political resistance and an articulation of identity. *The Freedom of the City*'s Skinner, for example, occupies the Lord Mayor's office, theatrically assuming the political agency that he, as a poor Catholic in Derry, does not truly possess. *Dancing at Lughnasa*'s Mundy sisters break into a wild, pagan dance that both expresses and protests their lives' circumscription by poverty and patriarchy. *Translations'* Lieutenant Yolland embraces the Irish culture and community his survey mission threatens to destroy, rejecting the Imperial ambitions and epistemology held by Lancey and his father. However, these acts of resistance

are met with swift reprisals: Skinner is executed by British soldiers, who have taken his symbolic "occupation" all too literally; Kate Mundy loses her job because the parish priest disapproves of her brother Jack's unorthodox religious practices, and her sisters Rose and Agnes are forced to leave home when their needlework fails to provide income; and Yolland is murdered by the Donnelly twins, who see him only as the invader his uniform would suggest that he is.

In staging these attempts to trespass, Friel both critiques the societal forces that erect and enforce these boundaries and offers, briefly, potential alternatives to dominant narratives of identity. This potential is staged in brief, resistant "gestures" which indicate, as *Translations'* Manus puts it, "a presence" (391). Such gestures include Skinner putting out his cigar on the Lord Mayor's desk and defacing the painting of a forgotten civil dignitary, the Mundy sisters' dance, and Doalty's sabotage of the English sappers' theodolite. These acts of resistance assert identities that exist in opposition to the dominant narrative; they are acts of both protest and self-articulation. In them, what Seamus Heaney calls "the contours of a validating personal language" are reconciled briefly with "the landscape of fact," only to be brought back into opposition when the dominant narrative reasserts itself ("For Liberation" 230). It is in this staging of resistance and dominance that many of Friel's plays depict "historical, social, moral, [and] psychological" collapse (Murray, *Plays Two* viii). Like Chekhov, to whom Friel is often compared, the Northern Irish playwright dramatizes moments of crisis and decline in order to isolate and diagnose the social, moral, and personal paralyses that precipitate them.

Chekhov is not, however, Friel's only predecessor in documenting paralysis and decline. Closer both geographically and chronologically is Friel's

compatriot Brian Moore, a Northern Irish writer whose first major novel *Judith Hearne* was published in 1955. Moore, who looked to James Joyce rather than Chekhov as his literary forerunner, found his Trieste in a small cabin in Canada, where he completed *Judith Hearne* based on memories of his childhood in Belfast. Moore sought to chronicle his own loss of religious faith, his disillusionment with the Catholic Church, and his resentment of the "harsh socio-economic bigotry" that characterized the society he had fled (Hicks 101). Moore's personal narrative of "the loss of faith in a young Irishman" is modeled on that of Stephen Dedalus in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* Not wanting to "risk adverse comparisons" with Joyce's work, Moore decided to reconfigure his protagonist in order to achieve a more objective stance, writing

> not about an intellectual's loss of faith but the loss of faith in someone devout, the sort of women my mother would have known, a 'sodality lady'… a bibulous Irish spinster of embarrassing pretensions, a character as foreign to me as Bloom must have been to Joyce, but a character which, in some way, was my then lonely self. ("Old Father, Old Artificer" 15)

Thus, through a cross-gender, Flaubertian literary performance of his own, Moore sought to narrate his alienation and subsequent self-imposed exile from Belfast Catholic society by creating a protagonist both deeply invested in this society's codes and abandoned by them to a life of loneliness and deprivation.[1] The novel, like much of Friel's work, depicts the negotiation between socially prescribed behavior and individual desire as it occurs in the formation of its main character. Judith Hearne is a plain-featured, single Catholic woman in her forties, born into an upper-class family but left, following the death of her

[1] See Brian Cosgrove's "Brian Moore and the Price of Freedom in a Secular World" for a comparison of Judith Hearne with Flaubert's Emma Bovary.

mentally unstable and domineering aunt, with a meager income, few marketable skills, and no marriage prospects. The "embarrassing pretensions" Moore mentions are Judith's attempt at maintaining a class status she no longer has; a performance of the social narrative her upbringing has inculcated in her despite her inability to achieve this narrative's happy ending. These pretensions reflect Judith Butler's characterization of performativity as a means of regulation: a "reiteration of norms, which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer" (Butler 234).

When the facts of Judith's life do not fit with the appearance of respectability Judith attempts to maintain, she employs various means to convince herself and others that they do. She cultivates a genteel manner to convince others of her respectability; to convince herself, she turns to fantasy, prayer, and when these fail, to alcohol. The identity built around these performances is necessarily fragmented by the dissonance between Judith's devotion to the religious and economic institutions that have shaped her life and her disappointment in these institutions' failure to satisfy her needs. Judith increasingly turns to alcohol to overcome this dissonance, but as knowledge of her drinking becomes public, Judith's performance of respectability becomes more and more difficult. Unlike men, women in Moore's Belfast cannot be alcoholics and remain socially intact. They are a problem for which the only solution is institutionalization, which is why Judith ends the novel as a confirmed derelict, confined to Earnscliffe House. Moore suggests that, despite her growing disappointment and disillusionment, Judith never truly escapes the socially imposed narrative because of the extent to which she has internalized its codes and the rigor with which these codes are policed.

Given the thematic and cultural links between the two writers, it is

unsurprising that Friel, who had read and admired Moore's novel, agreed to write a screen adaptation of *Judith Hearne* called *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne,* the title with which the novel was reprinted. While Friel's screenplay was never produced, the unpublished work still marks a significant point of intersection between the two writers and their historical contexts, demonstrating not only a relationship of literary influence, but also one of mutual investigation into the networks of exclusion that underpin Belfast society in both the fifties and the more politically fraught seventies. The screenplay offers an uncharacteristically urban setting within Friel's typically rural work, providing, as *The Freedom of the City* does, an examination of the conditions of urban Catholic poverty in the North. It also rearticulates Moore's characterization of Judith's need to conform to the expectations of her society, emphasizing the ways in which Judith, like the characters mentioned above, performs resistant gestures that both protest the condition she is in and articulate desires which, in Moore's heroine, remain deeply buried.

Friel has said that *The Freedom of the City* was written "out of some kind of heat and some kind of immediate passion that I would want to have quieted a bit before I did it" ("Interview with Fintan O'Toole," in Delaney 172). The same may be true of his version of *Judith Hearne*, which he began working on within weeks of attending the Northern Irish Civil Rights Association march in Derry on Bloody Sunday, during which British military forces would open fire on a crowd of protesters, killing thirteen unarmed civilians. The screenplay may bear the traces of an even more immediate response to Bloody Sunday, an experience not yet "adequately distilled" in Friel, filtered through a less immediate historical context just as Moore's autobiographical novel is filtered through a cross-gendered, deliberately distanced narrative perspective (Delaney

172). The script's concern with material conditions in Moore's Belfast, and its emphasis on external, rather than internal repression, reflects the same concern Friel had in writing *The Freedom of the City*, which he describes as a play "about poverty," brought into focus by the events of Bloody Sunday ("Interview with Eavan Boland," in Delaney 114).

Perhaps as a result of this focus, Friel's screenplay departs in several key ways from Moore's novel. It emphasizes the material causes of Judith's poverty, and links her situation with the disenfranchised Catholic poor in Northern Ireland. The structure of Friel's plot, while taking place in the relatively peaceful historical context of the 1950's, may constitute an allegorical echo of the narrative of Bloody Sunday: Judith, like the Catholics in the North, becomes increasingly dissatisfied with her poverty and marginal position, and begins to protest these conditions through a series of performances which disturb the rigid character Moore originally ascribed to his heroine, who by contrast remains thoroughly implicated in the power structures that oppress her.[2] These resistant performances culminate in a public, defiant, and intoxicated display as Judith plays a racy music-hall song on the church organ, only to be violently silenced by the authorities a scene that drastically departs from Moore's narrative of private religious crisis.

Where Moore's novel emphasizes Judith's conformity to the norms and expectations of her society, Friel's screenplay casts her in opposition to these norms, even as she is expected to perform according to their standards. The novel reflects Butler's definition of performativity as a regulatory force; the

[2] Judith's hysterical attack on the altar in the novel's climax may be an exception to this; however, while it takes place in a public venue it is cast as an essentially private conversation between Judith and Christ. She does not enter the church to make a statement, but to ask, one last time, for a sign from God that He exists: Moore repeatedly points out that "She did not see" the two women, the old man, or Father Quigley in the sanctuary (245). Her only attention is on the Sacred Heart, who she hopes will punish her, proving that He is real.

screenplay explores its possibilities as a means of resistance, "the possibility of a different sort of repeating" that constructs alternative narratives by which to live (Butler 271). In the film adaptation, Moore's sodality lady is recast as a distinctly Frielian heroine: trapped, but not silent; mocked, but self-aware; disenfranchised but resistant; obliged to perform but able, at times, to break out of the character her role in society demands in order to establish an identity of her own. Friel engages with Moore's implicit critique of a society that provides no outlet for Judith's creative personal, relational, and sexual energies, requiring acquiescence to its norms but offering nothing in return. He then expands upon this critique by dramatizing Judith's response to social repression through a series of transgressive performances, facilitated by alcohol and articulated through music. Through her response, Friel highlights the capacity for resistant performative gestures to establish and articulate identities that subvert dominant narratives without resorting to violence, which often only replicates the power structures it lashes out against.

Staging Judith Hearne: A Brief History of Adaptation

After Moore's novel was published in America in 1956, it generated numerous attempts at stage and screen adaptations. It was originally optioned by director Daniel Petrie, who planned to turn it into a play starring Katharine Hepburn, but she was only able to commit to a three month run, which, Petrie says, "Killed the deal" (Klady). John Huston bought the film rights in the early 1960's, and Hepburn again agreed to play the role, but Huston became occupied with other projects and the attempt foundered. Jerome Hellman bought the rights in 1966, and planned another film, this time with Moore himself as the screenwriter and Deborah Kerr in the starring role, but this also fell through. In 1971 the rights were optioned by Joseph Levine, who called in Daniel Petrie to direct, with a new script to be written by Brian Friel.

According to his personal diary, Moore wrote a note to one of Levine's agents suggesting Friel as a potential screenwriter on January 7, 1972 (*Diary 1972*). This suggestion came just weeks before Friel attended the Northern Irish Civil Rights Association march in Derry, on the 30th of January, a day now better known as Bloody Sunday. Friel agreed, and wrote to Moore in March saying that he had begun working on the script. Moore read a complete draft of Friel's script in December, so a significant portion of the work was completed within a year of Bloody Sunday, even though the manuscript with Moore's notes is dated 1975.

While both Hepburn and Vanessa Redgrave expressed interest in Friel's script, Petrie thought it "was too dour and downbeat," and that Redgrave "totally misunderstood the material" (Klady). Friel reportedly refused "to change his (even more) downbeat ending," and the project was scrapped after producer David Susskind was unable to raise sufficient funding ("Interview

with Julie Kavanagh," in Delaney, 219). Friel jokingly blames Moore for this in a letter, including a few sarcastic suggestions for the kind of ending the Hollywood producers might prefer:

> What has screwed up the whole thing ever since John Huston was a nipper is *your* lousy ending to the book. What is needed is a Beautiful Upsurge Judith as international president of AA, or plunging back into the arms of mother church and becoming a stigmatist, or eloping with the Professor's wife...I'm sick of them all [producers]." (qtd. in Toibin 151)

Friel's comments may be justified by the version of the film that finally was made in 1988, starring Maggie Smith, written by Peter Nelson, and directed by Jack Clayton. Nelson, after renewing the rights every six months for almost three years, finally emptied his personal pension to buy the rights, both producing and writing the script for the film (Klady). In his script, Judith's collapse culminates in her asserting her independence, telling Moira O'Neill, "I've made a new start from time to time before, Moira, and managed well enough" (Clayton, *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*) The ending includes a scene, not present in either Moore's novel or Friel's script, in which Madden returns to ask Judith to marry him, and Judith rejects him. He tells her, "At least [we would be] doing something together. Together's something," to which she replies, "So's alone." (*LPJH*). In Nelson's version, Judith's loneliness is recast as independence. The film concludes with Judith driving out of the resting home, dropping Madden's address out the car window, and smiling, accompanied by a slow upsurge of extra-diegetic classical music.

This is a decidedly more "upbeat" ending than either Moore or Friel offers. In the novel, Judith is left in Earnscliffe House, with the pictures of her Aunt and the Sacred Heart continuing to make her feel "at home" within the

institutional frameworks that have failed her. In Friel's version, she is back on the streets of Belfast, looking for yet another boarding house, more shabbily dressed and desperate than ever. Instead of driving off into the countryside surrounding Dublin, where Clayton's film is set, Friel's Judith is seen entering an untidy row house in a shot that pulls back to encompass the whole city. Friel's version may have been considered downbeat because he gives no final resolution to Judith's story, and, unlike Clayton's film, no indication that the O'Neills are going to take care of everything for her; she could be poised to repeat the cycle of loneliness, poverty, and alcoholism that the audience has just seen. As Christopher Murray points out, one of Friel's trademarks is "the indeterminate ending pregnant with future possibilities" (*The Theatre of Brian Friel* 22). His closing shot of Judith back on the streets of Belfast, which pulls back to encompass the city, would have made audiences in the mid-seventies all too aware of the devastating 'future possibilities' of Judith's situation. The untidy row houses Judith walks by would resemble those in news footage of the rising sectarian violence in West and North Belfast. As he does elsewhere in plays like *Aristocrats*, Friel refuses to provide a final answer to Judith's dilemma because he sees it still taking place in his own time: the housing estates of Belfast and Derry still play host to a disenfranchised class of people, caught in a cycle of frustration, poverty, and, increasingly, violence. This kind of ending is difficult to fit into the Hollywood model, which demands the "Beautiful Upsurge" Friel mentions, and may be one reason Clayton's version is relocated to the less politically contested site of Dublin.[3]

[3]Clayton's decision to film in Dublin may also have been the result of the continuing violence in Belfast in the late 1980's at the time the film was shot.

Performing Respectability: Maintaining Appearances in Moore's *Judith Hearne*

In *Judith Hearne,* Moore both explores and explodes the rituals and institutions that structure Catholic life in 1950s Belfast, depicting the ways in which a monolithic culture of church, class, and community polices its own rigidly enforced borders. Robert Green suggests that "Judith's character and the manner in which she is presented ensure that the reader remains constantly aware of the fictiveness, the artificiality of the text" (29), I would further argue that these narrative elements are calculated to expose the fictiveness and artificiality of the norms and expectations that shape Judith's character and society.

Moore's Judith attempts to perform according to the social narratives prescribed for her gender, class, and religious affiliation, even as these narratives fail to satisfy her needs. In Butler's terms, Judith continually tries to reiterate, internally and externally, a set of norms which "precede" Judith in the class dynamics embodied by her Aunt, "constrain" her within the sexual restrictions attached to Catholicism, and "exceed" her in their dominant hold on a society in which secular transgressions have spiritual repercussions (234). Both implicated in and excluded from the narratives the society around her has built, Judith accordingly demonstrates both the pressures of these narratives and the isolation that results from her inability to fulfill their imperatives. Judith must simultaneously convince herself and others that she is respectable, secure, and happy, even when she is not. This creates a dual framework of fact and expectation that Judith is constantly trying to parse. She performs, to borrow a distinction from Friel, publicly and privately, trying to convince both

herself and others of a security and satisfaction she does not feel. In public, she cultivates a genteel manner, collects stories with which to 'entertain' others, and maintains her association with a class she is excluded from on economic grounds. Privately, she attempts to reconfigure the facts of her own poverty, plainness, and loneliness with the stable, respectable impression she tries to create for others. Through her character, Moore depicts the rules attached to the dominant narratives of Belfast Catholic society as incompatible, incoherent, and disingenuous, particularly for women. Judith's society both sets the terms of her desires and prevents her from satisfying them.

Though Judith behaves as a Catholic woman of her class is supposed to behave sacrificing a career and potential suitors to care for her sick aunt, regularly attending Mass, carefully and modestly maintaining her appearance and social connections she is denied access to the benefits that are supposed to result from this behavior. She is both frustrated in the desires for intimacy, domesticity, and security her upbringing has cultivated and expected to continue living as though these desires do not exist, since, in a conservative, minority Catholic culture, there are no acceptable avenues for their realization available to her save an increasingly unlikely and unattractive marriage. This exclusion occurs largely for reasons that Judith cannot control: her physical plainness, her family's economic decline, the sexual restrictions and moral rigidity of the Catholic Church, and finally, her addiction to alcohol. Unlike Moira O'Neill, who comes from a more "common" background than Judith but is physically attractive, or her Aunt D'Arcy, who is unmarried and mentally unstable but financially independent until her death, Judith has no means of achieving the life her upbringing has led her to expect and desire. These expectations, however, have become so much a part of her identity that giving

them up would mean giving up her sense of self, so she continues to cling to them.

Moore's Judith is trapped by the institutions represented by her two most prized possessions: the picture of her Aunt D'Arcy, a constant reminder of the expectations and disappointments attached to her social class, from which she is now excluded economically; and the Sacred Heart, which embodies for Judith the moral and affective influence of the Catholic Church, an image of patient suffering with which she tacitly identifies. As both of these institutions continue to provide no solace for Judith's increasing loneliness and frustration, she turns to the only thing she can find that produces results: alcohol. The more she is dissatisfied with the life that adherence to church and society has provided, the more she turns to drink as means of escape. However, with each alcoholic binge, she also makes it more and more difficult for herself to fit into the role she has been trying to play her entire life: in Catholic Belfast, men may be allowed to drown their sorrows in the social institution of the pub, but women particularly women of Judith's class are not. So, she must move from boarding house to boarding house, trying to both cling to a disappearing respectability, and to escape the disgrace of the reputation she is building for herself with each relapse.

Moore casts Judith as an actress without a role in the prescribed drama of her society; a Beckettian figure; an understudy expected to wait in the wings for a cue that may never come, relying, like Winnie from *Happy Days*, on dwindling mental and material resources to pass the time and dull the pain. She articulates this status to Moira O'Neill towards the end of the novel, in a moment of desperate, intoxicated honesty:

'You might as well forget about eligible men. Because you're too late,

> you've missed your market. Then you're up for any offers. Marked down goods. You're up for auction, a country auction, where the auctioneer stands up and says what am I bid? And he starts at a high price, saying what he'd like best. No offers. Then second best. No offers. Third? No offers. What am I bid, Moira? And somebody comes along, laughable, and you take him. If you can get him. Because it's either that or back on the shelf for you. Back to your furnished room and your prayers. And your hopes.' (232)

As a plain, unmarried woman with few marketable skills, Judith has to appear independent without discouraging the interest of potential suitors, "to resist advances, to grant the favour of her company, to yield little by little" (153). She is painfully aware of how precarious her position is, asking herself "How many times before had she turned men away by her habit of boasting, of pretending that she had a good time all the time and needed no one," entering each conversation with a man afraid that "maybe he would be the last one ever and he would walk away now and it would only be a question of waiting for it all to end and hoping for better things in the next world" (74).

This fear of isolation drives Judith to perform in ways that emphasize her conformity with social norms, trying to make herself as attractive, entertaining, and unthreatening as possible:

> When you were a single girl, you had to find interesting things to talk about. Other women always had their children and shopping and running a house to chat about. Besides which, their husbands often told them interesting stories. But a single girl was in a different position. People simply didn't want to hear how she managed things like accommodation and budgets. She had to find other subjects and other

subjects were mostly other people. (8)

This reflects a comment Moore makes on his decision to write his story through a female character:

> Men, I find, are always, as they say in America, 'rolling their credits' at each other. They come on telling you what they've done, and who they are, and all the rest of it. Quite often, women don't do that, because life hasn't worked out that way for some of them. But when a woman tells me a story about something that happens to her, [I] often get a sudden flash of frankness which is really novelistic. It is as if a woman knows when she tells a story that it must be personal, that it must be interesting. (qtd in Toibin 136)

Judith is aware of this need to make stories interesting, but often unable to do so. Lacking exciting stories of her own, she collects the stories of "people she knew, people she had heard of, people she saw in the street, people she had read about…collected and gone through like a basket of sewing" (9). She then selects the stories she finds exceptional; either for their orthodoxy, like that of her aunt's relatives, buried in "one of the oldest cemeteries in the country. Full up now," (5), or for their shock value, like the story of Mrs. Brady, a local woman "that used to keep a bad house" told to her by Mrs. Rice, her latest landlady, and her grotesque son Bernard (9). Usually, however, these stories fall flat, and prompt responses like that of Mrs. Rice, who, "uninterested," in Judith's aunt's dead relatives, replies, "Well, that's interesting" (5), or of the O'Neill children, who break into laughter whenever Judith uses a story or phrase she has used many times before. The reason Judith is a bore, however, is that she has been denied access to a life that might yield "interesting stories" of its own.

Judith's liminal social position requires her to maintain both the appearance of eligibility and the painful hope that things will change. This leads, unsurprisingly, to the development of a fragmentary and self-doubting consciousness. She has to behave according to the social narratives attached to respectability, and to create in her own mind compensatory fantasies that reify her own conformity to these narratives despite the facts of her own poverty and exclusion. As she tells Moira and her daughter Una about her separation from Madden, and her subsequent desire to find new lodgings, she changes the story, indicating that it was she who broke things off. "This is the way it should have been," she thinks, though "Telling it, reversing the events to fit a more dignified pattern, she was uneasily conscious of the obligations of the lie. Told once, it must be retold until, in the blurring of time, it became reality, the official version, carefully remembered" (168).

We see this interaction between fact and fiction as Judith composes herself before going to breakfast with her new fellow boarders in the novel's opening scenes, preparing a face to meet the faces she will meet. The scene presents a Prufrockian image of simultaneous fabrication and self-doubt:

> She watched the glass, a plain woman, changing all to the delightful illusion of beauty. There was still time: for her ugliness was destined to bloom late, hidden first by the unformed gawkiness of youth, budding to plainness in young womanhood and now flowering to slow maturity in her early forties, it still awaited the subtle garishness which only decay could bring to fruition: a garishness which, when arrived at, would preclude all efforts at the mirror game.
>
> So she played. Woman, she saw her womanish glass image. Pulled her thick hair sideways, framing her imagined face with tresses. Gipsy, she

> thought fondly, like a gipsy girl on a chocolate box. But the little clock chittering through the seconds said eight-fifteen and O, what silly thoughts she was having. (17)

Moore's use of free indirect discourse contrasts the narrator's awareness of Judith's declining physical condition with that of Judith herself. The lines inflected with her voice "O, what silly thoughts she was having" suggest only a partial awareness of the fantasy of physical attraction she has created for herself. The shifting narrative voice emphasizes the gap between the narrator's detached perspective, with its terrible reversal of the "ugly duckling" narrative, and her own. The novel abounds with such moments, staging Judith's fantasies in ways that both reveal their mechanics to the reader and indicate her own gradually increasing awareness of their artifice. This awareness, as it expands with each new disappointment, finally extends to the social and religious institutions that have formed the bedrock of Judith's life: first, her expectation of a marriage to Madden, then, when that is proven false, her belief that religious faith will bring an end to her isolation. Judith, as she becomes aware of the gaps between her performed respectability and the reality of her situation, slowly confronts the possibility that the world she lives in is composed of the same artifice, and conceals the same lack, which is why she turns to alcohol to reinforce her version of the story.

Alcohol is the key to many of Judith's compensatory fantasies: where she cannot change facts, she attempts to realign them within a more pleasant and acceptable narrative, facilitated by the "unreason" of intoxication. As Brian Cosgrove argues, "Judith's resort to alcohol is best understood as an aspect of her recourse to fantasy…if Judith dreams and drinks, it is because there is nothing in her personal or cultural world to provide a sense of substantial

meaning" (60-61). So, she drinks in order to provide her own false, but tolerable, sense of meaning. Alcohol facilitates Judith's pleasant, but ultimately dangerous, self-delusions. For her,

> Drink was not to help forget, but to help remember, to clarify and arrange untidy and unpleasant facts into a perfect pattern of reasonableness and beauty. Alcoholic, she did not drink to put aside the dangers and disappointments of the moment. She drank to be able to see these trials more philosophically, to examine them more fully, fortified by the stimulant of unreason. (121)

Moore's Judith drinks to elide the "untidy and unpleasant facts" of her life: her poverty, her loneliness, and her abandonment by her own class.

By weaving together the various threads of Judith's economic, mental, and religious decline, juxtaposing moments of minor humiliation with those of highly wrought existential suffering and despair, Moore implicates a monolithic social system in which the behavioral codes of the Catholic Church are secularly enforced, and the constrictions of class and gender create untenable situations for those they exclude. This is why Judith's isolation from the community on economic and social terms is so closely tied to her religious crisis; to transgress socially, she must also transgress spiritually. The stakes of self-exclusion are absolute. The social narrative Moore depicts is one without exit: even its transgressive categories may be labeled, explained, and prescribed. Judith realizes when Moira tries to hide her from her children: "I am drunk, that is all she sees, a drunk person, nobody takes them seriously. Lie down and you'll feel better. Nobody listens. I am drunk. I must get out" (235). But there is no way out for Judith. In Moore's version of the story, drunkenness is just another category, another way for the individual to lose their voice and agency,

subsumed by the accepted narrative.

In a society defined by prescribed rituals and institutional codes, there is no escape: the novel concludes with Judith, surrounded once again by "the familiar things…Aunt D'Arcy's picture. More real now than aunt herself. For she is gone. It is here. It is part of me. And You [the Sacred Heart]…No matter what You are, it still is part of me…When [the two pictures are] with me, watching over me, a new place becomes home" (262). As Cosgrove puts it, "Such a fiction can come to seem more potent than 'reality' itself" (63). Judith ends the novel, despite her revelations and crises, reifying her identification with the institutions that have failed to meet her needs, because they constitute the only stable elements in her life.

'About Poverty': Friel's Politics of 'Passion'

Both Moore and Friel critique what Anna McMullan describes as "a society stifled by reified patriarchal authority and an economic, class and gender system reinforced and reproduced through the performative injunctions of 'respectability and status'" (142). However, where Moore's novel is invested in depicting the systematic dominance of these injunctions, Friel's version stages Judith's resistance to them. Friel wrote his film version of *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* concurrently with his two most political plays *The Freedom of the City* in 1973 and *Volunteers* in 1975 near the outset of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. One of Friel's concerns in revisiting Moore's depiction of Northern Irish Catholic society in the 1950s is to demonstrate the living conditions of a disenfranchised minority class, whose efforts to achieve equal rights and opportunities through protest are met at least in Derry on the 30th of January, 1972 with a violence that would spark a long and bloody procession of reprisals and retribution.

While Moore is concerned with depicting the pernicious narratives that dominated a restrictive society, Friel situates Judith within a disenfranchised Catholic minority whose material deprivation and social marginalization contribute to the outset of the Northern Troubles, and for whom the re-articulation of the narratives Moore depicts may represent the only constructive means of resistance. He extends Judith's "passion" both the intensity of her feelings and the religious valences of her suffering to the Catholic working classes. He accomplishes this by emphasizing Judith's poverty, her awareness of the obligations class dynamics place on her, and her growing dissatisfaction with this condition. He then contrasts her response with that of Madden who, while similarly marginalized, reacts with violence, rather than performance.

In order to highlight the political implications of this negotiation between public and private forces, Friel departs from Moore's emphasis on Judith's internalized performance of institutional narratives – the ways in which her repression is self-inflicted – and shifts his focus to the external conflict between Judith and the material causes of her unhappiness.

While Moore alludes to the discrimination present in 1950's Belfast, Friel depicts far more directly the conditions of poverty present in the city, and in Judith's life. Moore's depictions of prejudice are often directed towards Protestants, rather than Catholics, and presented as hyperbolic; just one of the ways in which Catholics reinforce their own isolation. In the novel, Madden and Judith refuse to clap when the Queen is shown on the news in the cinema, while the rest of the house, "Scots Protestants, black-hearted all" breaks into applause (97). Mrs. Rice proclaims that the Soviets are "No worse than the Protestants and Freemasons that are running this city…Hitler was no worse than the British" (38). Judith's aunt also believes that "they're bigoted in the civil service…if anything goes wrong, they'll blame the Catholic" (122). Significantly, Moore includes no scenes that lend credence to these assumptions, or that depict Protestant oppression: his subject is the oppression of Catholics, by Catholic society. While Friel does not depict any Protestant oppressors either, he focuses on the material conditions that systematic discrimination against working class Catholics has helped bring about.

Judith's marginalization is depicted in terms of her poverty, alcoholism, and creative repression rather than through her interior crises of sexual desire or waning religious faith. The screenplay focuses far less on Judith's religious crisis, and far more on the material conditions that contribute to her "lonely passion" – conditions which, Friel's narrative suggests, are not limited to

Judith's situation, but to an entire economic class. While Judith may be lonely, Friel suggests, she is not alone in either her condition or her frustration.

Friel emphasizes Judith's poverty through several different contextualizing scenes. In one of these we see Judith, "meticulous with the ritualistic preparations" of her evening meal. She takes such care in order "to heighten her anticipation" for the only food she will eat all day besides the meager toast and tea Mrs. Rice gives her tenants for breakfast. She falters, however, in her prayer to bless the meal – "too hungry to finish" (37).[4] Unlike Moore's protagonist, this Judith is far more concerned with material deprivation than spiritual obligation: for her, "Heaven is a full stomach" (37).

Later, as she walks the streets of Belfast alone, she sees students dancing outside a record shop, laughing, and eating. She "stares without expression" as one of the boys rubs his sandwich into a friend's hair, painfully aware of her own hunger and the community's indifference to it. On the same walk, she passes by a shop window that has been taken over for a "War On Hunger" flag-day, "covered with twenty identical pictures – a tiny black baby, emaciated, with a hunger-swollen stomach, hold[ing] out an empty bowl," at which Judith "looks vaguely" (23). What is for others an image designed to elicit pity is, for her, simply a reminder of her own condition, and the fact that her social position prevents her from eliciting the same kind of aid.

While she is looking at the picture, she is approached by her friend Edy Marrinan's brother, who tells her that he has had Edy committed to Earnscliffe House, because her alcoholism – delicately referred to as a problem with "her liver…" – has made her seriously ill, unstable, and "violent at times" (26). As

[4] Friel's *Dancing At Lughnasa* contains a similar scene, in which the impoverished Mundy sisters carefully prepare a recipe for "Eggs Ballybeg," attempting to postpone and heighten their anticipation for the meager ingredients they have on hand.

Judith, shocked, turns to leave, he calls her back, saying, "I almost let you escape and that would never do," and collects a donation from her for the hunger drive (27). To keep up appearances, Judith contributes financially to Marrinan's charity when, in the previous scene, we have just seen her checking her purse outside a cheap restaurant and deciding that she cannot afford lunch.

Friel also extends the gap between Judith's resources and the class from which she is descending by changing her only source of regular income from a small annuity left by her aunt to the public assistance of the dole. By doing so, Friel emphasizes just how far Judith has "fallen," and the humiliation attached to her only means of living. He links her condition with a significant proportion of working class Catholics and Protestants in Belfast, for whom the dole is also a primary source of income. Like Lily Doherty in *The Freedom of the* City, Judith "exist[s] on a state subsistence that's enough to keep you alive but too small to fire your guts" (*Plays One* 154). She has to appear, in public, at the Benefits Office in order to survive, and to encounter the physical reminders of her true economic situation: the working-class women waiting with her in the queue. Her encounter with one of them, a "thin, wan woman with a baby in her arms" who looks "as if she were about to collapse with malnutrition," (17) demonstrates a poverty we never see so explicitly in Moore's novel, linking Judith's situation with a working class reality of alcohol, violence, and deprivation, against which she has only the fading veneer of manners and education which, ironically, prevents her from voicing her frustrations as frankly as the women in line next to her, or from participating in their humor.

As the wan woman's baby keeps trying to pull Judith's hair, the woman remarks that he resembles his father: "Full of suppressed aggression" (18). To prove this, the woman points at her swollen right eye and says that her husband

had "come in drunk again last night" (18). However, as if to link the rising violence of a repressed Catholic minority in Friel's own time with these kinds of economic conditions, the woman then says "But you should see him this morning. I closed both of his," as her "wan face is transformed with delight and with triumph" (18). This eye-for-an-eye justice is tempting as a sign of triumph and resistance, particularly coming from a victim of domestic abuse, but in fact it has done nothing to remedy the systematic social causes behind her husband's alcoholism: their poverty, disenfranchisement, and lack of access to education. Friel both links violence, alcohol, and poverty and suggests that it is often inflicted upon fellow victims, or upon proximate, rather than ultimate perpetrators. After this scene, Judith is so anxious to leave the office that she does not bother to count her money, leading the clerk to mock her for her apparent superiority: "It would appear, m'dear, that some of us don't need to count it" (19).

In Friel's screenplay, Madden becomes another exemplar of the "suppressed aggression" of a disenfranchised class. Like Moore, Friel casts him as co-sufferer with Judith a similarly disenfranchised marginal figure. His language becomes coarser and more self-mocking, and his isolation more pronounced, emphasizing both his lack of education and his working class roots. As she drinks alone in her room after learning his true occupation, Judith has two visions of him "stripped to the waist" in front of, first, "a building site" and then, "a basement kitchen in an hotel," as he smiles "defiantly" at the camera (95-6). While Moore's notes on Friel's script object to Madden being made "too dumb [and] vulgar in his speech to be a possible [suitor] for Miss H," I argue that Friel emphasizes the disparity between the two characters' manners to reinforce the fact that they are in similar material

positions. While their manners differ, their isolation remains the same. This echoes Friel's decision to put Judith on the dole, juxtaposing her reserved public manner with the "common" working class women who are in similar economic straits. Friel also provides us with a glimpse of Madden's own "lonely passion" as, after Judith leaves him to have lunch with the O'Neills, we see him walking alone: "a pathetic image a maimed, middle-aged, lonely man trying to pass a now gloomy Sunday afternoon in a strange city" (74).

Just as Friel's Judith is shown to be more aware of the social performances she must give than she is in the novel, Madden is portrayed as more aware of the social and economic causes of his frustration. In addition to his boasts about America's superiority, he also recognizes that the economic engines of progress have excluded him, telling Judith, "It's a young man's country, America. They got no use for you when they figure you're over the hill" (58). He also laments his lack of education, displaying a vulnerability the Madden of the novel rarely does:

> MADDEN
>
> I'll tell you something: that's what I missed most in life - not having no education. Money's one thing. Sure, you gotta be sharp to make money. But once you have it - you know - if you want to spread out, meet people, move around, enjoy it - that's what you need - an education.
>
> JUDITH
>
> It's not everything.
>
> MADDEN
>
> You can say that 'cos you have it. Me - you know when I left school? Twelve years of age. (59)

Where the novel's interior focus emphasizes Judith's qualms about Madden's

"common as dirt" background, the screenplay allows Madden to challenge these class-based assumptions, and to display an awareness of what has been denied him.

Both Friel and Moore link Judith and Madden through their mutual inability to achieve the narratives of domestic and financial success: in the screenplay, after Judith insists that she is "really very lucky," Madden replies, ironically, "Yeah. Me too. That makes a pair of us - the lucky Irish" (59). In both the novel and the screenplay, Madden's frustration, like Judith's, results from the failures of the social narrative he has attempted to perform. His character reflects the failed dream of Irish-American emigration, and the impotent condition of Irish masculinity in a period Colm Toibín characterizes as "a society that was merely half- formed and had no sense of itself, a society in which the only real choice was to leave or live in a cowed internal exile" (136). He resembles Judith in the fact that he is unable to enact the established narrative of masculinity just as she cannot perform that of femininity: his inability to "hit it big" echoes Judith's inability to attract a husband. Both respond to these failures with alcohol, self-delusion, and the cultivation of a distinctive manner: Madden's tough Yankee idiom proceeds from the same impulse as Judith's punctilious manners for example, when, in the novel, she asks her plainspoken landlady for "just a *soupçon* of cream" (4). While Moore may have criticized Friel's use of vulgar speech in Madden's speech, both characters' idioms reflect the life they wish they had: Judith, the upper class lady, and Madden, the tough talking businessman.

However, both writers present Madden and Judith as having significantly different responses to their marginalization. While Madden can go to the pub to consume alcohol in a socially acceptable venue, live for free in his sister's

boarding house, and even vent his feelings of male inadequacy by first beating, then raping Mary, his sister's teenage maid, who cannot even report his crime without losing her job in Mrs. Rice's respectable Catholic house, Judith is confined to secret bouts of drinking, and private, rigidly repressed sexual desires. Moore's Judith never questions the validity of this arrangement; indeed, her own sexual fantasies are marked by violence and the desire to be dominated. In an early fantasy about Madden, she imagines what domesticity with him might look like:

> He came into the room, late at night, tired after a day at work in his hotel. He took off his jacket and hung it up. He put his dressing-gown on and sat down in his armchair and she went to him prettily, sat on his knee while he told her how things had gone that day. And he kissed her. Or, enraged about some silly thing she had done, he struck out with his great fist and sent her reeling, the brute. But, contrite afterwards, he sank to his knees and begged forgiveness. (26)

She has internalized the narratives attached to her gender, and is only frustrated because she is denied access to them. This is evident with one of the first exchanges she has with Madden, after she asks him if it is true that men in America "put their wives on a pedestal":

> 'Yes, that's correct, more's the pity. That's what's wrong with the system, if you want to know. Guys beating their brains out to keep their wives in mink. It's the women's fault. No good. You should see some of the girls that walk on Broadway or Fifth. All dressed up with a dollar sign for a heart. Walking cash registers. Me, I wouldn't have nothing to do with them."
>
> 'O, that's not like Ireland, Mr Madden. Why, the men are gods here, I

honestly do believe.'

'And right too. Head of the house. That's the teaching of the Church. What the man says goes. Now, in the States, the women want it both ways. They do no work and they want to be boss as well.[…]

'Well,' she said. 'Irishmen certainly wouldn't stand for that, would they?' (25)

Because she is so deeply invested and implicated in the social codes of her society, Moore's Judith is ready to endorse even a relationship that places her in a position of servility, silence, and domination, if it can only provide access to companionship and social legitimacy. Friel's version notably omits this exchange.

However, Friel by no means lets Madden off the hook; his vulgarity, misogyny, racism, and sexual violence are still clearly present in his onscreen character. Friel suggests that, while Madden's frustrations may at least partially result from social causes, his reactions to them perpetuate, rather than alleviate, the institutional violence behind them. While Madden is repeatedly cast in opposition to a hostile and disingenuous Belfast society, he is also constantly lashing out in frustration when his actions do not produce the desired results. Friel symbolizes this struggle through Madden's repeated inability to get various machines to work his "battle with reluctant Irish machinery" (35). While Judith is pacing the streets of Belfast, we see Madden entering an amusements arcade to wait for the pubs to open. He puts a coin into a "one-armed bandit," and wins, but the machine gives no payout. Friel's directions for this scene are paradigmatic of Madden's dealings with the world in general: "Madden is due a dividend. The machine doesn't deliver. Madden shakes it. No dividend. Madden looks to the Bouncer. The Bouncer's eye is resolutely on his

paper…Madden grabs the machine and rocks it violently from side to side" (19). Like Judith's, Madden's frustration derives from the realization that he has invested far more in life than he has managed to collect; the dream of emigration to America has proven a false promise, and he has returned to a society whose machinery is broken and whose authorities take no steps to fix it. So, Madden takes matters into his own hands. When a cigarette machine refuses to dispense, he first accuses it "Like everybody else in this gawddam country, you're out to gyp me huh?" then kicks it, and his cigarettes drop out (28).[5] He then says, "Watch it, baby. I've been around," suggesting that machines may not be the only thing he "fixes" with physical force (29). Like Farrington in Joyce's "Counterparts," Madden vents his frustrations through alcohol, self-aggrandizing talk, and violence towards those few who are weaker than himself.

The scene with the cigarette machine bears an uncomfortable resemblance to the scene with Bernie and Mary, in which Madden, after discovering the two in bed together, "can control his hands no longer…[then] grabs her and shakes her" (47). "Crazed with desire," Madden shakes the girl until Bernie's attempts to stop him bring him back to his senses. In this scene, Friel leaves out Madden's striking the girl, the better to visually link this scene with the one in the pub: in his frustration, Mary becomes just another machine refusing to give him what he wants. Friel emphasizes again that violent responses to social disenfranchisement are often inflicted upon those below, rather than above, the sufferer in the social hierarchy. Madden's attempts at enforcing his frustrated desires on those around him are destructive, rather

[5] After discovering that she is not actually wealthy, Madden will later suggest that Judith, too, is "Phoney. Same as everyone else in this phoney town. Stringing me along" (107).

than creative, and contribute to a society of exploitation rather than opposing it. This paradigm is reversed when he is mocked by a group of boys in the street – one of whom, carrying "an ostentatious Sunday-school prayer book," tells him, "If you were to walk with one foot on the road and the other on the footpath - you'd have no limp!" – he "lunges at them," yelling "Bastards! Fucking little bastards!" (75), but is unable to catch up with them. Meeting cruelty with violence, particularly from position of relative weakness, is shown to be a natural, but futile response.

Madden's racism shows in his conversation with Major Mahaffy-Hyde, an ex-British army officer who believes "Civilization must be protected with might" (22). After the Major suggests an investment in Haiti, Madden is outspoken in his disgust for "English-speaking, Spanish-speaking, Italian-speaking, Gaelic-speaking, nigger-speaking niggers – the lot" (23). Because of his aspirations to rise in society, he clings to the idea of superiority over anyone more marginal than himself – just as the children in the street delight in antagonizing an easy mark. This may be why he, of all the characters in either work, is the only one who believes Judith's performance of respectability: like Michael in *The Freedom of the City*, Madden is the working class character most invested in the hierarchy in which he hopes to rise. Through this investment, Friel suggests that the violence of Madden's response only reiterates the violence and exclusion that have kept him in his place.

'Shocking Songs': Judith's Resistant Performances

Following the events of Bloody Sunday, resistance in Northern Ireland increasingly became not merely a question of overcoming exclusion from normative values, but of negotiating between competing political narratives that attempted to shape and categorize individual stories according to their own agendas. While the politics of regulation and resistance were being argued on the streets of the Bogside and West Belfast, questions of how to respond to dominant social force became more urgent than examinations of its inner workings. In a political climate of mutual resistance, defined by difference and mutual exclusion, how could communities and individuals establish their identities in positive, rather than purely oppositional terms? Friel's work to date has attempted to answer this question by staging this crisis of identity in personal, local terms.

In addition to emphasizing the material deprivation of the working class in Moore's Belfast, Friel's script can be read as exploring alternatives to the violence that increasingly defined political resistance in the North. Friel locates these alternatives in something resembling Butler's definition of subversive performativity; "the possibility of a different sort of repeating" in a landscape of reprisals and ritually reinforced narratives of difference (271). His screenplay foregrounds the ways in which Judith's social and musical performances function as a response to institutional repression, rather than, as Moore suggests, an instrument of that repression. To demonstrate this potential, Friel widens the cracks in Judith's polite facade to reveal her frustration with the conditions of her life. For Friel, Judith's self-realization depends upon finding a means of articulating this frustration, and her desires, in order to assert her own identity. In doing so, he contrasts the possibilities of performance with

those of violence, questioning, as he does in other works, the ways in which "gestures" like Skinner's vandalism of the Mayor's office in *The Freedom of the City* might represent alternatives to more violent acts of resistance, like the Donnelly twins' murder of Yolland in *Translations*.

Judith's ability to perform according to what Heaney might call her own "validating personal language" is contrasted with Madden's impotent acts of violence, his attempts at kicking broken machines to make them work ("For Liberation" 230). While Madden lashes out impotently, Judith must break out of her polite character in order to assert and articulate her own desires.[6] Judith's plight further resembles that of Lily Doherty, who realizes immediately before her death, "that life had eluded me because never once in my forty-three years had an experience, an event, even a small unimportant happening been isolated, and assessed, and articulated" (150). In his adaptation, Friel both identifies this regret and attempts to correct it; through her performances, Judith's passion is isolated, assessed, and articulated — though, like Lily's, it is also tragically silenced. While Moore's novel depicts Belfast Catholic society as a network of restrictive, often empty institutional performances — employing a style similar to the "scrupulous meanness" of Joyce's *Dubliners* — Friel emphasizes the ways in which performance can also become an act of both resistance and self-articulation, injecting, as Joyce did with the addition of "The Dead" to his collection, a measure of musicality into Moore's bleak narrative, even as he dramatizes the forces which ultimately silence it.

One reason for Friel's shift in emphasis regarding Judith's character

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[6] This is partly because violence is not often a viable option for her. The only act of violence she does commit — slapping Bernard after he tells her that if she does not let her "last chance" with Madden slip by, she will "drink herself into a madhouse" (115) — immediately sees her injured far worse than Bernard is, as she falls and hits her head on the fender of the stove, lending support to Bernard's false report that she has passed out drunk.

could be that it is necessitated by the shift in genre from novel to screenplay; on the stage or screen we see the outward expressions of characters' interiority through action and speech, and are not granted the direct access that the private address of the novel form allows. It could be argued that Friel's heroine is more vocal about her condition because, on screen, this is the only way for us to recognize her internal frustration. Moore's heroine is so rigidly controlled that, without access to her subconscious desires, we might miss the turmoil that takes place in her mind. However, I would argue that Friel's extensive directions provide an elaborate and detailed score for the motivations behind Judith's actions and manners, and could, if Friel wished, communicate Judith's interiority to the actress who plays her. If he wanted to simply recreate Moore's character on screen, he would not include the transgressive moments represented by Judith's performances, or make explicit characterizations of her mood as "triumphant" or "defiant." Moore's notes on the screenplay suggest a similar conclusion: the points at which Moore most objects to Friel's script are the points at which Judith's protests hit their highest pitch. Thus, the screenplay's focus on outward resistance is not necessitated by formal constraints, but represents a definite interpretive choice on Friel's part.

Friel's heroine may still be obligated to perform socially, but she is significantly more conscious of the fact. As she walks alone through the city, with no one to impress, she lets her facade drop a far cry from Moore's heroine, who, even in private, still "slip[s] on her underthings under the concealing envelope of her nightgown" (16). Friel's directions, by contrast, indicate a character both aware of the need to perform and weary of doing so: "Now that she is alone, with no necessity to perform, her face is drained of all animation and her eyes are dead. She has two tasks on hand: to pass the day,

and to keep her mind off food" (20). Friel's Judith performs because she has to, not because she still considers herself genteel.

Because of these obligations, however, she must remain constantly alert. In the scene with Mr. Marrinan, Judith has to perform suddenly, and in several registers; first, she must conceal her horror at Edy's institutionalization both for the sake of politeness and because it is largely fueled by her own anxiety regarding what her society does with women who drink to excess, and second, she has to contribute more than she can afford to Marrinan's charity in order to maintain appearances. As in Moore's novel, Judith's liminal social status means that she must act respectably without enjoying the material benefits of respectability, but, unlike the novel's heroine, Friel's Judith is aware of this from the start.

Another scene in which we see the interplay between social obligation and resistance in Judith's character is during her visit to the O'Neills, the "only…house in Belfast where she can talk freely - to equals" (68). We get the sense that even Judith does not quite believe this: she overhears the O'Neill children mocking her manners, confirming her status as a social obligation and a bore, but her smile "only becomes more resolute" (66). Judith's reaction in the novel is a resolution, which she does not keep, not to repeat the phrases the children mock her for. By contrast, Friel's Judith is aware of her marginalized status but determined to get what she can out of her visit, even if she is mocked. She sits down to chat with Moira, who further confirms Judith's unimportance by falling asleep mid-conversation, interrupting Judith's exaggerated account of Madden's wealth and potential interest in her. A shift in Judith's demeanor occurs, and her voice changes register, becoming "strange, tense, controlled" as she begins to tell the sleeping woman the truth,

unsurprised that she has fallen asleep:

> Always. I'm going to the pictures with him tomorrow night. Yes. And if he asked me to go with him to New York - to Haiti, I'd go. Yes. Because when you get to my age, Moira, and when you're alone as I am, and you're hungry, it's not easy to keep despair away. No, it's not easy, Moira. No, it's not easy. (70)

Moira only snores in response, emphasizing once again that Judith has to perform for a society that, rather than being hostile to her, is largely indifferent to what she actually has to say. While Moira sleeps, Judith paces the room, eating several chocolates, looking enviously at Moira and Professor O'Neill's wedding portraits, and finally, pouring herself a drink from the tray. This scene never occurs in Moore's novel, and its presence suggests that Friel is concerned with staging both Judith's isolation and her desire to be heard, her hunger for food and drink, warmth, and comfort. She sits down at the piano, thinking back to the constricted circumstances of her childhood, in which she learned to play:

> And in the distance we hear a five-finger exercise being played falteringly - a sound that evokes an image of reluctant lessons in cold, comfortless rooms. And suddenly, as if to drown the sound and kill that image, as if to assert a better, richer life, Judith begins to play Chopin's "Polonaise." [Close-Up of her face: joyous, elated, eyes sparkling.] (71)

This performance marks the first moment of resistance we see in Judith's life, undertaken not through fantasy or self-delusion, but with music the expression of a beauty rarely ascribed to Judith's physical appearance, but which she desperately craves. Through it, we are given a glimpse at the Judith behind the mask and manners, who both understands the reality of her

situation and articulates a desire to "assert a better, richer life" beyond the circumstances in which she has found herself. The spell breaks, however, when Moira awakes, and the rest of the O'Neill family enters the room for tea, and "Judith, as usual, affects her animated manner": back to performing for someone other than herself (71).

While he does emphasize these possibilities, Friel is under no illusions regarding their cost: Judith's ability to break character occurs, in almost every instance, under the influence of alcohol, which for Judith is both a means of escape and the chief contributing factor to her decline. As in Moore's novel, Judith's alcoholism is a temporary relief but a long-term liability. For Friel, however, Judith turns to alcohol not, as Moore suggests, to reinforce her fantasies, but to tell the truth. Friel significantly takes the line "in vino veritas" which is originally thought by Moira as she hears Judith's drunken confession, and attributes it to Judith, linking Judith's alcoholism with her awareness that, no matter what its consequences, the drink, and perhaps the socially transgressive category of drunkenness, allow her to tell the truth about herself in ways that she is otherwise unable to do. The capacity for this articulation remains positive, even if it is achieved through a potentially self-destructive addiction.

Friel takes a quality that for Moore represents only a means of self-deception and examines its possibilities as a means of resistance and self-expression. For Moore, drunkenness is a category that robs Judith of agency and credibility; for Friel, it is a state of exception that allows her to tell the truth. The hysteria attached to Judith's triumphant performances is the result of the social forces trying to keep her in check; through it Friel suggests that the only way to escape a pernicious and repressive cultural logic may be to go

mad, no matter how tragic the results. Friel represents this hysteria, like alcohol, as having positive as well as negative possibilities: he is well aware of the Dionysian links between wine, divine madness, and theater. Where Judith's alcoholism may be self-destructive, the expressive freedom it affords is necessary and cathartic. Its necessity results from the failure of a society that provides no alternatives; no creative outlets for self-expression, or political outlets for self-determination. Friel captures both the potential and the liability of drink for Judith by juxtaposing the scene in which Madden rapes Mary in her bedroom with Judith's first capitulation to drink but where Madden's frustrations are vented through sexual violence, Judith's are articulated in the songs she sings while drunk.

Friel emphasizes that the songs Judith sings during her first bout of drinking are transgressive, having Lenehan, one of Judith's fellow boarders, refer to them as "shocking" (101). While Moore's note on the manuscript asserts that Judith, even when drunk, would not sing "shocking" songs, the divergence between the two writers' versions highlight their different treatment of Judith's alcoholism. Moore's Judith would not sing shocking songs because she drinks to accommodate herself and her internal narratives to the expectations of her class: she constructs fantasies of herself as a socialite, or a celebrated concert pianist, because these fantasies are shaped by the desire to achieve a normatively successful life. By contrast, Friel's Judith often uses her singing to articulate frustrated desires that do not conform to normative values: she sings "Mr. Porter" the first time we see her drink, which is a music-hall song about a girl who has both missed her train and gone too far: "I wanted to go to Birmingham / And I should have changed at Crewe" (99). This is, ironically, precisely the condition Judith is in. She also expresses her implicit desire to

subvert controlled piety with profane exuberance: we hear from Madden that, while singing the night before, "She went straight from 'Hail Queen of Heaven' to 'They're a Dirty Lot Of Bastards in the Old Transvaal'" without changing key (101).

We see another example of Judith's alcohol-fueled protests when, during tea with the O'Neills, Judith continues to accept sherry when it is offered exceeding the "Two is my absolute limit' of Moore's novel (85) and becoming "almost imperceptibly tipsy" (76). As she drinks, the cracks in her facade begin to show: Judith begins to take liberties, and to express a few genuine emotions. She takes the opportunity to disparage Ellen, the maid who refuses to treat her with the deference she feels she deserves:

MOIRA

We consider Ellen one of the family, Judy.

JUDITH

And I consider dear Ellen slightly uncouth.

But as Aunt D'Arcy used to say: "Thank God I'm no egalitarian" (76).

Moore, in his notes on the screenplay, objects twice to the depiction of Judith's relationship with Ellen: "People like J. H. don't discuss the maid" (ii). This objection makes sense within Moore's conception of Judith as maintaining the illusion of upper class status; if Judith believes she is on par with the O'Neills, she has no need to denigrate the maid. However, since Friel depicts Judith as more aware of her own degraded economic and social status, Judith's criticism of the maid becomes a site of class conflict between herself and the O'Neills. Ellen's refusal to show deference for Judith reflects the disparity between her class and theirs, despite Judith's belief that the O'Neills' house is the only place she can talk "to equals" (68): "In [Ellen's] scale of values - and isn't it the same

as the Master's? - Miss Hearne doesn't merit the niceties" (66). Sensing the condescension of the O'Neills through Ellen, Judith strikes back against it by criticizing her manners, and, by extension, those of her employer. Hugh may consider Judith "a character" for whom he has "quite an affection," but his affection, as Moira points out, "Doesn't extend to spending a whole boring afternoon with her" (78).

As she continues drinking, we get the impression that Judith's tipsiness is becoming more and more perceptible: as Judith lifts the sherry bottle once again, Moira "very deftly and very firmly takes the bottle away from her and puts it on the departing trolley" (76). As she makes ready to leave, Friel adds a brief duet with Owen, the man she wishes she could have married. Together they sing the English folk song "Early One Morning": "Oh do not leave me. Oh don't deceive me / How could you use a poor maiden so?" (77). This prompts Moira to remark, ironically, that "The two of you should be on stage" (77). The song, which depicts the lament of a maiden waiting for her lover, who has abandoned her, is both a subversive way for Judith to articulate her desire for Owen and an ironic depiction of the fact that the fulfillment of this desire is impossible.[7] This brief performance, like the sherry, provides a brief instance of warmth for Judith, who comments, "We have our moments Owen, don't we?" (77). These moments, like the Sunday meals with the O'Neills, are all Judith has; she takes, eats, and drinks what she can.

When she leaves, uplifted by the sherry, Judith begins to celebrate what she still believes may be her own impending nuptials. Seeing a young couple,

[7] This performance is reminiscent of Aunt Julia's faltering performance of "Arrayed for the Bridal" in John Huston's 1987 film of Joyce's *The Dead*, which, rather than celebrating her musical prowess, emphasizes Julie's loneliness, and the fact that she has never been 'arrayed for the bridal' herself.

she "puts her face right up to theirs and sings at the top of her voice the opening line of the 'Polonaise'" (79), once again 'shocking' her audience. She then meets a Franciscan priest and asks him if he's "Enjoying [his] loose habits?" (79). Where we have recently seen Madden raging against the mockery of children, we see Judith mocking the very institution which, in Moore's novel, so dominates her imagination. Perhaps this is why Moore's notes object to this line in particular: Friel's reconfiguration of Judith as performing her opposition to the institutions that dominate her, particularly the Church, rather than struggling to conform to their prescriptions, breaks the character Moore sought to create. Judith then rewrites an advertisement that reads, "I LIKE JAM" to read "I LIKE JAMES" (79). In this series of transgressive, humorous performances none of which occur in the novel we see Judith, her inhibitions loosened, disregarding the proprieties and decorum that have thus far stifled her, and coming to a decision about her feelings for Madden. These performances emphasize Judith's resistance and articulate desires that, in Moore's heroine, remain deeply buried. As the "sherry-elation" dies, she remains confident in what she has expressed: "serious, deadly serious, as she nods in approval," saying softly to herself, "Yes. I do. I do. Yes" (79).

Another such articulation occurs when she returns to the O'Neills' home, after fleeing Earnscliffe House followed by a cacophony of "wild, mocking laughter…a groaning, pop music, strange laughter, saucepans, asthmatic coughing" sounds meant to indicate impending madness, urgency, and desperation (132). Judith enters the O'Neills' uninvited, and pours herself a drink, "very aware that her bold entrance, pouring herself a drink, being intoxicated in public - all are serious breaches of the precise etiquette that has always determined her relationship with the O'Neill family," but determined

that “she is now going to carry the occasion off with defiance and recklessness” (133). Moira, “very authoritative,” tries to take the bottle away, but Judith “turns adroitly away,” holding on to it. Though drunk, it is her show; she is in control now. She addresses herself in the mirror, echoing the address she made to the sleeping Moira, speaking as much for herself as for her audience:

> So here you are, calling on your friends, your posh friends, the O'Neills. But the remarkable thing is, Judith, you get a very distinct impression that the professor's wife isn't exactly elated at seeing you. Well, no, there's nothing really remarkable about that, Judith, because the professor's wife was never elated at seeing you - courteous, yes - elated, never. And if the truth were told, Miss Hearne - and in vino veritas, Miss Hearne - you were never exactly elated at seeing the professor's wife either. As a matter of fact, Miss H., you could scarcely endure her. (134)

This confession, which she has long thought would end her association with the O’Neills, actually facilitates the most genuine human connection that takes place in the screenplay or the novel: Moira, moved by Judith’s confession, embraces her: “For a second, two seconds, three seconds, four seconds, [Judith] relaxes within those strong competent arms” (135). After that, however, she breaks away, leaving the house. These four seconds constitute what may be the only glimpse Friel affords us of an alternative community; occurring between rivals, facilitated by an honest articulation of feeling, based on mutual forgiveness. Read politically, Friel may be suggesting with this scene that this kind of self-articulating performance is necessary for reconciliation, even where there exists a long history of jealousy and miscommunication.

After she has left Moira, Judith enters the church, still quite drunk. Having achieved a resolution with Moira, she is going to be honest with God.

She does not attempt to open the altar door, and behaves calmly, rather than desperately. She looks at the Risen Christ in the stained-glass window, just as she looked in the mirror at the O'Neill's: "Now I know what you are. You are just nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing at all" (136). Her face "is that of still another Judith, not stubborn, nor weary, but relieved, relaxed…her step is jaunty and she herself antic, frolicsome, happy" (137). A scene that is tragic in Moore becomes triumphant in Friel: Judith's refrain of "Nothing Nothing Nothing" leads into a musical celebration of freedom, rather than a desperate lamentation of lost belief:

> The word "Nothing" bubbles from her in delighted amusement this is her happy discovery and she repeats it a dozen times in a dozen different voices, savoring the various sounds softly, privately to herself. JUDITH: Nothing - nothing - nothing - nothing - Nothing - nothing - nothing - nothing - Until the word takes on a musical rhythm which she conducts with her hands and to which her button shoes respond in time" (137).

Judith, rather than being left with a vacuum in the absence of the religious faith that has propped up her hopes and desires, finds that beneath the social constraints she has accommodated for her entire life, there is a woman finally able to communicate to shape her character according to her own narrative, not an externally imposed one. She sits down at the organ and begins to sing "Mr Porter" a music-hall song about a girl who has gone "a bit too far" even as the priest and the policeman enter to restrain her:

> The gesture, of course, is defiant. But there is more than defiance: there is genuine joy and exultation in the sound itself; there is joy and exultation in creating that profane sound in this sacred place; and finally

> a joy and exultation that is rapidly going over the top and into hysteria" (138).

These directions echo those in Friel's later play, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, in which the Mundy sisters dance in defiance of their own poverty and frustrations:

> With this too loud music, this pounding beat, this shouting calling singing, this parodic reel, there is a sense of order being consciously subverted, of the women consciously and crudely caricaturing themselves, indeed of near-hysteria being induced. (37)

In discussing that play, and the use of céilí music in *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*, Friel writes that the purpose of music in those instances was "to explode theatrically the stifling rituals and discretions of family life" (Murray 177). This is what Judith's performance, however briefly, accomplishes: self-articulation through art, resistance without violence. As "one hand - in a soutane sleeve - grips her left hand," and "another hand - in a policeman's sleeve - grips her right hand," Judith maintains her gesture of resistance, even as she struggles with the two representatives of Church and State, her "eyes dilated in joy/hysteria" (138). Friel repeats three times the line "But still she sings" (138), drawing out the struggle and heightening its affective register; when "we see a hand raised high - in threat? in benediction?" as it "contracts into a clenched fist," the silence which follows the "heavy thud" of Judith being subdued is deafening (138). Where Moore's Judith faints in a moment of religious crisis, Friel's heroine is forcefully silenced by the priest and a figure absent from Moore's narrative: the policeman. Violence may quell this act of resistance, but the perpetrators of this violence, two men in authority beating down a middle-aged woman in a church, are hardly cast as victors. Judith may be forced to stop singing; nevertheless, she has found a voice.

In contrast to Madden, Judith articulates her frustration through words and music; through self-articulating performance, not violence. Through these performative acts of resistance, Judith begins to come into her own. Beyond simply rejecting the old story, she begins to tell a new one. In doing so, she creates an alternative, imagined reality similar to the one Seamus Heaney describes in "The Redress of Poetry": "a reality which may only be imagined but which nevertheless has weight because it is imagined within the gravitational pull of the actual and can therefore hold its own and balance out against the historical situation" (3). Friel privileges the sustaining, rather than self-deceptive qualities of imagination. Where Moore depicts Judith's fantasies as reinforcing the restrictive narratives in which she is caught, Friel depicts Judith's imagination not as a flight of fancy but as an envisioned alternative to the alienation imposed on her by a society that will not listen or render aid. While this imagined reality may finally, tragically succumb to the all too powerful "gravitational pull of the actual" in Judith's life, it remains as a glimpsed alternative to the forces that suppress it just as the NICRA march in Derry on Bloody Sunday remains as a missed opportunity for peace.

Thus, Friel's ending ostensibly too "down-beat" for the Hollywood producers, can be read as more hopeful than Moore's own: "indeterminate…[but] pregnant with future possibilities" (Murray, *The Theatre of Brian Friel* 22). Rather than ending his version in Earnscliffe House, with Judith clinging to performances she knows to be false, Friel concludes with a scene that echoes the film's opening, showing Judith back on the streets, in "a row of houses more run-down than in Sc. 1, " her face set in a "fixed, strained, absurd-grotesque smile" as she looks for a new room to let (139). While her material conditions are worse than they are at the close of the novel, Friel's

decision to have the camera slowly pull back to encompass, "the house, the street, rows of streets, and finally a panoramic view of the City" as the film closes suggests the potential for corrective action; while Moore's Judith is placed safely back into the institutions she has always supported, Friel's heroine remains dangerous, mobile, and present. Through this closing image of Judith moving through the urban spaces which the resurgence of the Troubles has called into question, Friel creates, as Karen Moloney suggests that he does in many of his other plays, an alternative Cathleen Ni Houlihan; a figure calling for true Irishmen and women to defend her, not through violent rebellion, but through a political shift that addresses the social and economic forces holding her, and so many others, in check. In this sense, the screenplay performs the same task Seamus Heaney ascribed to Friel's drama in his 1980 review of *Translations*, constituting "a powerful therapy, a set of imaginative exercises that give [Cathleen]," like Judith, or Lily Doherty, "the chance to know and say herself properly to herself again" (Heaney, *TLS* 1199).

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